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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS

26 May 1948

Chief, FBIB

Visit of the Chief, FBIB to the FBIB London and Mediterranean Bureau Installations during the period 10 April through 21 May 1948.

1. The FBIB London and Mediterranean Bureau Installations were visited by the Chief, FBIB during the periods indicated below.

London 11 April to 17 April 1948  
8 May to 21 May 1948

Cairo 23 April to 30 April 1948

Cyprus 30 April to 7 May 1948

Appropriate action relative to routine matters noted, as well as those listed below which it believed should be brought to the attention of the Assistant Director for Operations, was taken on the spot, or will be initiated where approval by or coordination with other offices of CIA is necessary.

a. London

(1) The FBIB Bureau at Caversham Park, Reading, and London, England is considered very satisfactory.

(2) A good cordial relationship exists between the staff of FBIB and BBC.

(3) Teletype rooms at both London and Caversham are in operation 24 hours a day. However, in order to adjust our operation to BBC transportation schedules on which our employees presently depend for transportation to and from work, it has been necessary for a portion of the editorial staff to work a 10 hour day, 4 day week. This results in too many editors on duty between the hours of 1500 and 1800 daily and no editors on duty between the hours of 0130 and 0730. Upon arrival at Caversham of FBIB transportation now en route, all personnel will work an 8 hour day, 5 day week which will be more efficient and will insure that an editor is on duty at all times except between the hours of 0330 and 0730. When the authorized Table of Organization is completely filled, it will be possible to have an editor on duty 24 hours each day if the monitored material received is sufficient to warrant this.

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(4) The enforcement of rules of punctuality, conduct and discipline of employees in general by the Chief of the Bureau is not completely satisfactory.

(5) Most of the London and European consumers of the so called "London Roundup" were interviewed either in person or by telephone. With the one exception of the Radio Network Control of the Information Control Division in Berlin, it was found that local consumers do not use this report sufficiently to warrant making an effort to tailor it to suit their needs, and further that if this report is tailored to suit Washington consumer needs, it will automatically meet those of the Radio Network Control, IGD.

b. Mediterranean Bureau

(1) Cairo

(a) The present FBIB operation at Cairo is sub-standard in all respects and should be completely reorganized prior to the move to Cyprus.

(b) Engineering - The monitoring site and installation on [ ] some six miles from Cairo is poorly engineered, poorly constructed, does not have direct American supervision, and is unsatisfactory.

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(c) Monitoring

1. Interception is divided between the monitoring site on [ ] and the main FBIB offices in Cairo.

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2. Programs intercepted at the [ ] site are recorded at the site, and the recordings are then delivered by motor messenger to the Monitoring Section in the Cairo office.

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3. Programs intercepted in the Cairo office are also recorded and then delivered to the Monitoring Section. Here as in 2 above, the monitor first listens to the recorded broadcast and not to the original.

4. The degree of proficiency of linguists varies. The most proficient is not sufficiently well qualified to monitor directly from the receiver, and simultaneously produce a typewritten transcribed summary in English. In many instances, one linguist is required to produce a typewritten copy in the original language, a second is required to translate the original into English, and a third to type it into proper form for presentation to an editor. This process is not only time consuming but requires three persons. [ ] an operation performed by one at all other FBIB stations.

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(d) Editing

1. Wire Section

a. Selection of material filed to Washington is made by locally hired personnel none of whom, I believe, has ever been to the United States.

b. Editors receive only the broadest form of American supervision and heretofore had never been furnished editorial targets.

c. Too much emphasis has been placed on quantity and not enough on quality.

d. The number of editors employed is too great for the amount of wordage being handled.

e. After copy has been edited, it must be typed again so it can be handled by a Marconi operator who is totally unfamiliar with editorial hieroglyphics.

f. The copy finally edited and typed is delivered to Marconi by motor messenger.

2. Publication Section

a. The Publication Section publishes a daily report of approximately 20,000 words which is distributed locally to American and British officials.

b. This report apparently receives more supervision than the Wire Section, one American editor devoting his full time to it, but still is published almost completely by locally hired personnel.

c. Approximately 8 editors and several typists are employed in the production of this report.

d. Personal interviews with many of the consumers of this report indicates that the amount of time, effort, and money being devoted to this publication is not warranted, and that a daily roundup similar to that currently prepared by FBI London Bureau would fulfill the needs of most consumers. This report should be discontinued when the Cairo Bureau is moved to Cyprus. If sufficient demand for a roundup is made by the American Embassy in Cairo, it should be prepared and transmitted to the Embassy via the most expeditious means consistent with the availability of

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funds. The roundup would be as valuable to embassies and consulates in other nearby countries as it would be to the Embassy in Cairo. Since the contents of this roundup would be furnished to State Department officials in Washington only a few hours after it could be furnished to consumers in Egypt and other nearby countries, and since furnishing such a service by cable would be quite expensive, it is believed that the cable charges for such a service, if furnished, should be borne by the recipient.

(e) Communications

1. Communications are most unsatisfactory.

2. The only communications available between the Cairo office and the Mono Road intercept station is motor messenger. No telephone communications exist.

3. No teletype circuit exists anywhere making it necessary to deliver typewritten copy to Marconi by motor messenger.

4. This copy is then transmitted to London via commercial circuit, and thence to Washington in the same manner as other FBI traffic from London.

5. An analysis of the Cairo file indicates the following approximate average time lags.

a. Time broadcast to time of dispatch from Cairo cable office - 15 hours.

b. Time of dispatch to time of receipt in London - 3 hours.

c. Total lag to London - 18 hours.

d. Time of broadcast to time of receipt in Washington - 24 hours.

(f) General

1. The leadership at this station is inadequate.

2. A sizeable increase in the American staff is considered imperative. At present, the American staff is on duty from about 0730 to 1400, 6 days a week. No editors at all are on duty from 1400 to 1700 and from midnight to 0700.

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3. The Chief of Mission appeared to spend his entire time on administrative matters, doing most of his own typing, and to devote very little time to actual operations.

4. Contact between the American staff and locally hired employees appears to be entirely too infrequent.

5. Morale of locally hired employees is not good.

(2) Cyprus

(a) The CIA party which is on Cyprus for the purpose of constructing a new FBIB monitoring station has made excellent progress. As a party and as individuals they have been completely successful in obtaining the good will and cooperation of the Colonial government and other officials.

(b) On 7 May 1948, the necessary leases and purchases of land had been completed.

(c) Architectural plans, for the construction to be undertaken, were completed by U. S. Army Engineers in Athens, Greece on 9 May 1948. A construction engineer was to be dispatched to Cyprus shortly thereafter to let contracts and actually supervise the construction.

(d) It is believed that construction of this station will be complete some time between 1 November 1948 and 1 January 1949.

(e) The American Consulate headed by [redacted] has been officially opened at Nicosia. [redacted] believed that his cryptographic equipment for encoding and decoding messages would arrive at Nicosia by 1 June 1948 and that very shortly thereafter State Department courier services would be available.

(3) General

(a) Because many of the present staff in Cairo do not meet FBIB standards and because many of them probably would not be acceptable for employment on Cyprus, it is believed that only a few of this staff will be transferred to Cyprus.

(b) Only a limited number of personnel with the desired qualifications could be recruited on Cyprus.

(c) The Mediterranean Bureau staff should be completely reorganized at Cairo at the earliest possible date, in order to insure that a competent staff, acceptable for employment on Cyprus, is available immediately upon completion of construction of the new station. To accomplish this with efficiency and dispatch, it is believed that it will be necessary to recruit linguists in other nearby countries and that some arrangement must be made to transport new employees and their families to their duty stations at U. S. Government expense.

(d) A new Table of Organization for this Bureau should be set up which would provide for substantially all of the editorial and engineering personnel to be regularly appointed U. S. Civil Service employees hired in the United States.

c. FBIS-BBC Reciprocal Arrangement

(1) Following an inspection of the BBC Monitoring Service at Caversham Park, Reading, England, the Chief, FBIS was accompanied by the Head of BBC Monitoring Service on an inspection of the FBIS Mediterranean Bureau Installations of Cairo and Cyprus.

(2) On 20 May 1948, the first formal meeting of the "FBIS-BBC Coordination Committee" was held at Caversham Park, Reading, England. See Appendix A - Record of Meeting.

L. K. WHITE

Appendix A

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